

# Parliamentary Procedure

## **When you want the group to make a decision:**

You say "I move that we\_\_\_\_\_." (Called a main motion. Only one on floor at a time.)

*The Chair--*

- Repeats motion and calls for 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- Repeats motion and calls for discussion.
- Calls upon people who want to discuss.
- When discussion ends, repeats motion and calls for a vote.
- Announces result of vote.

## **When you want to make a small change in a motion:**

You say "I move to amend the motion by\_\_\_\_\_." (e.g., "adding/substituting/striking the words...")

*The Chair--*

- Follows same procedure as above for main motion.
- Amendments are decided before the main motion.
- Once the amendment is decided, return to consideration of main motion.

## **When you voted on the winning side on a motion but now you have changed your mind:**

You say "I move to reconsider the motion to\_\_\_\_\_." (Usually same meeting)

*The Chair--*

- Needs a second.
- Debatable only if motion to be reconsidered is debatable. May not be amended.
- If passed, return to discuss and vote on the motion to be reconsidered.

## **Minor or Incidental Motions:**

### **You think the Chair made a mistake in following the rules of procedure:**

You say "Point of order, Mr./Ms. Chairperson." (One of few times you may interrupt another speaker, even the Chair)

*The Chair--*

- Says: "State your point."
- Listens to member, decides if correct, corrects mistake, and goes on with meeting.

### **Group is bogged down about a matter which is not urgent, or you think more information is needed before the matter can be decided:**

You say "I move that we refer the matter to a committee."

*The Chair--*

- Says: "It has been moved that we refer the matter to a committee."
- Handles like a main motion.
- If motion passes, refer matter to an existing committee or appoint a new one.

**Group is not ready to make a decision, and want to wait until a later meeting to decide:**

*You say* "I move that we postpone this matter until the next meeting (or other meeting)."

*The Chair--*

- Handles like a main motion.
- May be amended.
- Only needs majority vote.
- If passed, put on agenda for meeting stated in motion to postpone.

**Debate drags on, you are sure that everyone has made up his/her mind, and you want to end the debate:**

*You say* "I move the previous question." (This is only a vote to vote. If it passes, vote on the main motion. If it fails, continue debate on main motion.)

*The Chair--*

- Says: "The previous question has been moved.
- Requires a second.
- No debate.
- Two thirds vote to pass.

**Tips for the Chair**

1. Repeat all motions.
2. Call for both "yes" and "no" votes.
3. Don't discuss motions.
4. Be fair.

**Motions Which Can Be Made At Any Time:**

**When you want the group to take a short break:**

*You say* "I move that we recess until \_\_\_\_\_(time)."

*The Chair--*

- Requires a second.
- May be amended but no debate.
- Majority needed to pass.

**Order of Business**

1. Call to order
2. Approval of minutes
3. Reports
4. Old business
5. New business
6. Adjourn

**When you want the meeting to end:**

*You say* "I move that we adjourn."

*The Chair--*

- Requires a second.
- No debate.
- Majority needed to pass.

**Time-Saver Tips**

- ❑ After presentation of the minutes (minutes do not have to be read), chair says, "If there are no additions or corrections, the minutes will stand approved as printed."
- ❑ When there is no new business: "If there is no further business, the meeting is adjourned."
- ❑ Post or distribute a handout at hearings that explains the procedures and expectations of public hearings, manages public testimony, etc.